

*The False Hope
of a Second Probation*

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Published by

REVIEW & HERALD PUBLISHING ASSOCIATION

TAKOMA PARK STATION, WASHINGTON, D. C.

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THE chief publications of what is known as the Millennial Dawn teaching consist of a "Millennial Dawn Series" of five volumes, and a semimonthly magazine, of which Rev. Charles T. Russell, the leading writer and preacher, is editor. With commendable zeal the adherents of this faith are scattering their literature, and many conscientious Christian people are numbered among the believers in the doctrines.

We have no intention of entering into any exhaustive review of the teaching of Millennial Dawn. We wish to call attention to a few statements from their publications concerning the idea of "a future probation," or "second chance," that it may be clearly seen, when tested by the Bible, how unscriptural and dangerous such a doctrine is.

The central idea of the Millennial Dawn doctrine is that of a second probation, during what is termed the "millennial age," when many of the hindrances to the attainment of righteousness are to be removed. As the host of the wicked come forth in the resurrection, they will find, we are told, "a new power in control," which they will "strive in vain to resist." In all kindness we must say that we believe this to be a very subtle and dangerous error, one of the fables of the last days.

A Wrong View of Christ

The following statement concerning the Saviour is worthy of notice in beginning:—

"To our understanding, the Scriptures show that in order to ransom man, the Son surrendered forever the spirit nature and life which he had, and became a man pure and simple, though a perfect man."—*Millennial Hopes and Prospects*,

page 4.

I quote again from a work written by the leading exponent of this doctrine:—

“Neither was Jesus a combination of the two natures, human and spiritual. . . . When Jesus was in the flesh, he was a perfect human being; previous to that time he was a perfect spiritual being; and since his resurrection he is a perfect spiritual being of the highest order.”

“Thus we see that in Jesus there was no mixture of natures, but that twice he experienced a change of nature; first, from spiritual to human; afterward, from human to the highest order of spiritual nature, the divine: and in each case the one was given up for the other.”—*Plan of the Ages,* Vol. I, pages 179, 180.

We do not see how language could more clearly express the idea that Jesus, when on earth, was merely a human being, with no spiritual or divine nature. This is the redeemer of this system of teaching, but it is not the Christ of the Bible. Were the above true, we should have only a human sacrifice, which can save no one.

Perish the thought that Christ was a man only! It is true that he was a man, a perfect man. Again and again he is called the “Son of man.” “There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the *man* Christ Jesus.” 1 Tim. 2:5. But the Millennial Dawn idea of our Redeemer is dishonoring to him. It takes away from us a divine Saviour, and gives us only a man.

While Jesus was a man, he was God also. He was as much the Son of God when on earth as when commanding the angels around the throne through the eternal ages. “And when he again bringeth in the first-born into the world he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him.” Heb. 1:6. Angels have never been bidden to worship one who was only “a man pure and simple.” He had power when on earth to forgive the sins of the transgressors of the divine law, and none can “forgive sins, but God alone.” Luke 5:21. He was the Son of the eternal God clothed in flesh. His majesty and divinity were

veiled in humanity. We can not, perhaps, understand how this is, for it is "the mystery of godliness." It is beyond the comprehension of mortals, but it is the truth nevertheless.

The Doctrine Stated

As before stated, the central idea of the "Millennial Dawn" belief is that of a second probation. The following quotations state their position on this matter:—

"During the millennial age, there will be a restitution of all things lost by the fall of Adam (Acts 3: 19-21), and before its close all tears shall have been wiped away."—*"Plan of the Ages," Vol. I, page 73.*

"Those who do not receive a full knowledge and, by faith, an enjoyment of this favor of God in the present time (and such are the great majority, including children and heathen) will assuredly have these privileges in the next age, or 'world to come,' the dispensation or age to follow the present."—*Id., page 129.*

"And why should not the Sodomites have an opportunity to reach perfection and everlasting life as well as Israel, or as any of us? . . . Thus our Lord teaches (Gen. 19: 24; Luke 17: 29; Matt. 11: 23) that the Sodomites did not have a full opportunity; and he guarantees them such an opportunity when he adds (verse 24), 'But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee.'"—*Id., page 110.*

These quotations are sufficient to show the positive teaching in reference to a second probation. At the risk of being thought harsh, we must say that Satan never invented a doctrine better calculated to ensnare souls than that of a "second chance," another "probation" in the millennial age. Here we are told that the inhabitants of the city of Sodom, whose deeds were so revolting and wicked that the long-suffering God could no longer permit them to curse the earth, are to have another probation.

What teaching is better calculated to confirm men in sin than this? It says to all who hate God, of every class, Live on in the haunts of sin, and bedaub yourselves amid the gilded halls of shame and infamy. Do despite to the Spirit of God as much as you please. Take your fill of iniquity; drink the cup of sin to its very dregs. Reject every overture of mercy. Mock at the pleadings of Jehovah, and despise his loving counsel to repent. You will have another chance, another trial, when circumstances are more favorable! Such a heresy is well pleasing to the unregenerate heart, and is calculated, as nothing else ever can be, to lull sinners to sleep in carnal security, and land them in *gehenna* at last.

Temptation Removed, and Righteousness Compulsory

In the millennial age, we are told that sinners will be placed under "favorable opportunities" for attaining perfection. The description of the new earth in Isaiah 35 is given a symbolic explanation, and made to teach how men will be enabled to live a righteous life in the millennial age:—

"Of that highway it is significantly stated in symbolic language that 'no lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there.' Isa. 35:9. How many frightful lions are now in the way of those who would be glad to forsake sinful ways, and to pursue righteousness! There is the lion of a degenerate public sentiment, which deters many from venturing to obey the dictates of conscience in matters of every-day life—dress, home, and business arrangements, etc. The lion of temptation to strong drink hinders thousands who would be glad to see it removed. Prohibitionists and temperance workers now find a herculean task on their hands, which only the authority and power of the next age can remove; and the same may be said of other worthy efforts at moral reform. 'Nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon.' No giant corporations, organized to advance selfish, individual interests at the expense of the general good, will be tolerated.

'They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain' (kingdom), saith the Lord. Isa. 11:9. Though there will be difficulties to labor against in overcoming propensities to evil, etc., yet in comparison with the narrow way of this age, that will be an easy way. The stones (stumbling-stones) shall all be gathered out, and the standard of truth shall be lifted up for the people. Isa. 62:10. Ignorance and superstition will be things of the past, and righteousness will receive its due reward, while to evil will be meted out its just deserts. Mal. 3:15, 18. By wholesale chastisements, fitting encouragements, and plain instructions, as returned prodigals, mankind will be trained and disciplined up to the grand perfection from which father Adam fell."—*Plan of the Ages*, Vol. I, page 217.

We will give one more quotation on this point:—

"Many erroneously suppose that when Christ's millennial kingdom is inaugurated, every one will be pleased with its ruling. But not so. Its regulations will be far more exacting than those of any previous government, and the liberties of the people will be restricted to a degree that will be galling indeed to many now clamoring for an increase of liberty. Liberty to deceive, to misrepresent, to overreach and to defraud others, will be entirely cut off. Liberty to abuse themselves or others in food or drink, or in any way to corrupt good manners, will be totally denied to all. Liberty or license to do wrong of any sort will not be granted to any. The only liberty that will be granted to any will be the true and glorious liberty of the sons of God—liberty to do good to themselves and others in any and every way; but nothing will be allowed to injure or destroy in all that holy kingdom. Isa. 11:9; Rom. 8:21. That rule will consequently be felt by many to be a severe one, breaking up all their former habits and customs, as well as breaking up present institutions founded upon these false habits and false ideas of liberty."—*Id.*, page 302.

With the temptations of this life taken away, with no liberty to deceive, with all opportunity to misrepresent "entirely cut off," people who find it galling indeed, are nevertheless to be

compelled to do only right. The devil himself could be made a Christian of that kind. Christianity is Christ-likeness. He is not what he is because he is compelled to be, but because he chooses the right. He "loved righteousness and hated iniquity." Heb. 1:9. The theory of right-doing forced forth from a wicked nature, is a denial of the Saviour's principle, "A good tree can not bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit." Matt. 7:18.

Such teaching utterly ignores the power of the gospel of our Lord and Saviour. The gospel of Christ is able to give a man the victory over sin. It changes the corrupt passions of the heart. Noah was a righteous man even in the degenerate time in which he lived. Lot also walked with God in the midst of Sodom. This will ever stand as a proof that the inhabitants of Sodom had the opportunity to be saved. Only when men have lost sight of the power of the gospel, will they claim that in order to attain unto holiness it is necessary to remove temptation. Those who enjoy the bliss of the eternal ages will be those who have come up out of great tribulation, and perfected holiness in the midst of temptation.

A Delusive Hope

We are told that in the millennial age opportunities will be "favorable" for holy living. But read this:—

"When men come to life in the next age, they will come with the same characters and tastes and desires they had in this life. 'In the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be.' Eccl. 11:3. That means that no change will have taken place in men while they are dead. And when they come to life, they will attempt to live as they did before; liars and thieves will still be inclined to lie and steal, but they will find a new power in control; no policemen, no magistrates, no judges as we have them at present, no jails, and yet they will be punished by an invisible power, which they will strive in vain to resist."—*"Millennial Hope and Prospects,"* page 6.

"Favorable opportunity" indeed! The wicked, we are told (and this is doubtless true) will come forth from the tomb with the same wicked desires which controlled them when living. Picture this terrible scene if you are able. The long-lived giants who defiled the earth so dreadfully before the flood are all to live here again. Then the Sodomites, whose evil deeds have been a synonym for sin from their time till the present, are all to live again on the earth; the Amalekites, Canaanites, Jezebel and all the prophets of Baal, with the entire heathen population who have lived since the fall of man; the crucifiers of Jesus, and all the persecutors of the church who have lived since Calvary; all the murderers, harlots, and drunkards, and those monsters of cruelty whose inhuman deeds, perpetrated during the Dark Ages in the name of Christianity, would have made savages shudder,—all these multiplied millions of rebels against the government of heaven are to *live* here during the millennial age, and to have the same "desires" as before. And this is to constitute the "favorable opportunity" for sinners to repent! What folly!

But we are told that there is to be a "new power in control," which this wicked host will "strive in vain to resist." What "new power" is this that is to be in control? There is no power in the universe stronger than the power of the gospel. "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." Rom. 1:16. What agency is there then which is more potent than this to save souls? To men now the Lord says, "Behold, I have given you power . . . over all the power of the enemy." Luke 10:19.

To souls now, who are struggling to overcome the dark passions of sin, our Lord says, "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy." Jude 24. Thank the Lord, there is a power now before which the powers of sin must yield. The believer allies himself to a power which the hosts of darkness can not overcome. We do not have to look

forward to some "millennial age" for a power to overcome sin. That power is here. The Holy Spirit has come, and through this agency the Lord is able to save to the "uttermost," and those who disregard its powerful entreaties in this life will have no opportunity to be saved in a future age.

The fact that all are not saved is no evidence that the gospel is not able to save all. It is an omnipotent power, but the Lord can not force salvation upon men; for righteousness in its very nature is of choice, and can not be of compulsion. He has given to all the freedom of choice, without which there could be no such thing as development of moral character. To angels was given this power. Some of them chose to rebel, and fell from their first estate. Adam was left free to choose. Through all the ages God has been pleading with men to "choose life." And there will never come a time when some power unto righteousness will seize hold of men, which they will "strive in vain to resist." This is no part of the plan of God. He draws all, but he compels none. The Spirit strives with all now, and those who resist it shut themselves away from life. They can yield and be saved, or resist and be lost.

The Broad Way

The Scriptures clearly teach that those who are finally saved will be only a few compared to the number who will be lost. "Enter ye in by the narrow gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many are they that enter in thereby. For narrow is the gate, and straitened the way, that leadeth unto life, and *few are they that find it.*" Matt. 7: 13, 14. This is the teaching of the Scriptures throughout. "Millennial Dawn," however, teaches just the opposite. I quote:—

"While the special hope of the gospel age is so surpassingly glorious, and the way to it is correspondingly difficult—narrow—so that few find it, and obtain the great prize at its end, the new order of things in the age to come is to be entirely

different. As a different hope is held out, so also a different way leads to it."—*Plan of the Ages*, Vol. V, page 215.

In another work we find this:—

"Now, then, Jesus having died, and thus having paid man's penalty for sin, every man will live again, and every human being will be brought to a knowledge of the truth, and will be restored to perfection—perfection such as Adam had before he sinned. And when so restored to perfection, each one will be on trial for everlasting life, just as Adam was, but with this difference; viz., that each restored man will have that which Adam did not have, and that is a full knowledge of and experience with the awful results of sin."—*Millennial Hopes and Prospects*, page 4.

It is difficult to see how universal salvation could be more fully taught than this. If all sinners are to be placed back to the perfection of Adam before the fall, what more is necessary to salvation? This makes the road to eternal life *wide* instead of *narrow*. However, after all this, some, they admit, will be lost:—

"Some one may say, You are a Universalist! But no, we are not Universalists. We believe in a *universal opportunity* for all men to be saved, but we do not believe that all men will be saved to everlasting life, for the Bible clearly shows, as we think, that even under the favorable opportunities and surroundings of the millennial age, some will persist in sin, and will go into the second death."—*Id.*, page 5.

According to this writer "every human being" is to be brought to "perfection such as Adam had before he sinned." Certainly this is a condition of absolute sinlessness. Yet some are to "persist in sin," and die the second death. But how can this be? Do they fall and lose their Adamic perfection? It would seem that in order to have two trials, or two probation, two falls are necessary. Why, then, stop with two falls? Why not continue throughout eternity with "falls," and "probations"? Such teaching contradicts the Bible, and utterly subverts the gospel.

A "universal opportunity" for all men to be saved, forsooth! Every man has an opportunity *now* to be saved. Jesus stands at the door of every human heart, knocking for admission. "Behold, *now* [not in a millennial age] is the accepted time; behold, *now* is the day of salvation." 2 Cor. 6:2. "*To-day* if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation." Heb. 3:7, 8. "*Whosoever will* [present tense], let him take the water of life freely." Rev. 22:17. All are bidden to come, and they can come *now*. Jesus said, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, *will draw all men* unto me." John 12:32. Not a single soul is born into this world, but feels the drawing influence of the Holy Spirit, and all will be saved who do not resist and reject that influence.

Ever since the fall of man, God has been doing all he could to save the children of Adam. He has left nothing undone which can be done to rescue the deluded captives of Satan from the snares of sin. He gave his Son, and in this gift emptied heaven of every treasure, that the claims of the broken law might be met, and man be lifted by grace up to the place whence he fell. The Holy Spirit and angels are doing all that can be done to save man, while leaving him free to choose. But the Lord compels none to yield to him.

With the utmost confidence the challenge is issued, "What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it?" Isa. 5:4.

The grace of God which bringeth salvation has "appeared to all men." Titus 2:11. In the bosom of every human being there is some knowledge of right and wrong, for Jesus "lighteth every man that cometh into the world" (John 1:4, 9), and if the man follows on, he will know the Lord. Light brings responsibility.

"If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now [after I have spoken] they have no cloak for their sin." John 15:22. The rejection of light brings condemnation; and so in the judgment the Lord will judge men by the light they have had. "For as many as have sinned without [a

knowledge of the written] law shall also perish without [a knowledge of the written] law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law . . . in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men, by Jesus Christ according to my gospel." Rom. 2:12, 16.

In the things which God has made is seen a revelation of his power and Godhead, so that we are plainly told that the heathen are "without excuse." Rom. 1:20. No millennial age, or second probation, is needed to give man an "opportunity" to be saved. Our God is a "present help," and if we do not accept the "opportunity" now given us, we settle our destiny forever. "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." Luke 16:31. Those who refuse the present opportunity would likewise reject a "second" chance.

It is not true, as taught, that the Sodomites did not have a "full opportunity." They had the light of the gospel. "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to *all men*." The Sodomites had a "full opportunity." Titus 2:11. "In him [Christ] was life; and the life was the light of men." "That was the true light, which lighteth *every man that cometh into the world*." John 1:4, 9. Every man, whether living in the blazing gospel light of this land or in the midst of heathenism, who follows all the light he has will be saved. None can do more than this.

The people of Sodom had light. When vengeance because of their iniquities was slumbering over the doomed city, the Lord stayed his wrath against sin until he sent them one more gospel call, one more call to repent and be saved, a special warning of the coming destruction. Missionary work is to be done now, and not in some future age. Angels visited Sodom and warned Lot, and bade him warn others. And had there been only ten persons in the city who were not inseparably wedded to sin, the Lord would have spared the entire city. It will be "more tolerable" for Sodom than for Capernaum in the day of judgment, because Capernaum sinned against greater

light. Increased light always brings increased responsibility, and, if rejected, increased condemnation. It is a terrible thing to turn away from light. Let none do so, hoping for another opportunity to embrace it in a millennial age, for there will be no such opportunity then.

The Bible Teaching on the Sanctuary Disproves Future Probation

Here is another quotation which presents in a concise manner the teaching of Millennial Dawn concerning a second probation during a future age:—

“And, as the apostle declared, this grace of God—that our Lord Jesus ‘gave himself a ransom for all’—must be ‘testified’ to all ‘in due time.’ Rom. 5:17-19; 1 Tim. 2:4-6. Men, not God, have limited to the gospel age this chance or opportunity of attaining life. God, on the contrary, tells us that the gospel age is merely for the selection of the church, the royal priesthood, through whom, during a succeeding age, all others shall be brought to an accurate knowledge of the truth and granted full opportunity to secure everlasting life under the new covenant.”—*“Plan of the Ages,” Vol. I, page 131.*

As before stated, we believe that no falsehood concerning the great plan of the ages is better suited to deceive souls than the doctrine set forth in the extract given above. Once unregenerate men are persuaded that they will have a more “favorable opportunity” in the millennial age to repent and turn away from sin, they will procrastinate the day of repentance, and continue in transgression. “If it is to be more favorable later,” they say, “it is reasonable that we wait.”

The Bible has very definitely settled the question of a future probation. It states in no ambiguous manner what will be the end of those who obey not the gospel. The feet of David once well-nigh slipped when he saw the temporal prosperity of sinners, but when he went into the sanctuary of God, he received light concerning their end, and saw how foolish he had been.

A correct understanding of the sanctuary question is of vital importance in this connection. It is the hub around which every fundamental truth of God's Word revolves. It is not to be wondered at that without the light which shines from the heavenly sanctuary men lose their reckoning and drift away from the land-marks of truth.

The services connected with the earthly sanctuary were typical of the services performed in the heavenly sanctuary, and throw a clear stream of light upon the question we are studying; and those who, like David, go into the sanctuary will have light concerning the end of sinners, and will fully understand that there is no second probation for those who refuse to repent in this life. From the typical services connected with the earthly sanctuary we are clearly instructed that the work of Christ as our great high priest closes in the sanctuary above before he comes the second time, and consequently there can be no salvation for any beyond this time.

When Moses was directed to build the sanctuary, he was instructed to make it "according to all that I show thee, the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the furniture thereof, even so shall ye make it." Ex. 25:9, A. R. V. See also verse 40. And not only was the sanctuary itself a pattern of things in the heavens, but the work of the priesthood was a type of the priesthood of Christ. The priests served as a "copy and shadow of the heavenly things." Heb. 8:1-5.

The sanctuary consisted of two apartments, a holy and a most holy place. "The priests went always into the first tabernacle [or apartment], accomplishing the service of God." Heb. 9:6. Daily throughout the whole year the services went forward in this apartment. The sinner having brought his offering and confessed over it his transgressions, it was slain, and the blood was taken by the high priest into the first apartment, thus in figure transferring his sins into the sanctuary.

"But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people." Heb. 9:7. It was necessary that

the earthly sanctuary be cleansed, not from physical impurity, but from sin (verse 23), so once in the end of the year, on the tenth day of the seventh month, occurred the great day of atonement. Read Leviticus 16.

On this day two goats were taken, upon which lots were cast, one for the Lord, and the other for Azazel, or Satan. The one upon whom the Lord's lot fell having been slain, the blood was solemnly borne by the high priest into the most holy place of the sanctuary, and sprinkled before the mercy-seat, which covered the holy law of God. "And he shall make an atonement for the holy place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins. . . . And when he had made an end of reconciling the holy place, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar, he shall bring the live goat: and Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness. And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness."

This completed the round of service, and the sanctuary was clean. This was the typical atonement (Lev. 16: 33), the atonement, the reconciliation of the sinner to God. And let it be carefully noted that only those whose sins had been confessed and transferred from themselves into the sanctuary were atoned for. And what was done with those who did not avail themselves of the provisions offered throughout the year? Did they have another chance, a second probation under more "favorable opportunity"?—No, indeed. "For whatsoever soul it be that shall not be afflicted in that same day, he shall be cut off from among his people." Lev. 23: 29. So far as that round of service was concerned, his probation was ended, and his destiny fixed. All had a chance,—one chance,—and if they did not accept it, they were "cut off." The cleansing of the

sanctuary, at the end of the annual round of service, was a work of judgment.

The Work of Our High Priest

All this serves unto the "example and shadow" of the work of Christ, our high priest. In heaven is "the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man." Through the merits of Christ's blood the sins of all who confess and forsake them, are transferred into the heavenly sanctuary. This, too, must be "cleansed," not from physical uncleanness, but from the record of sin, carried into the sanctuary through confession and faith in the atoning blood of Christ. Heb. 9:23. The cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary, according to the earthly type, is a work of judgment, the closing ministry of our High Priest. The great prophetic period of Dan. 8:14, was to mark the opening of this work. The beginning of this twenty-three-hundred-year period (a prophetic day standing for a year) is shown from Dan. 9:25 and Ezra 7:8, to date from the year 457 B. C.

Twenty-three hundred years from that date, or in 1844, this solemn work began in the heavenly sanctuary. "Once [not twice] in the end of the world hath he [Christ] appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." Since 1844, the work of the investigative judgment has been going on, and the final round of services in the heavenly sanctuary has been carried forward. In the vision of Dan. 7:9, 10 the prophet describes the heavenly court in session, the opening of the books of record, while still events are taking place on earth, just before the end. When Christ's ministry there is ended, probation for the world is ended also. Only the sins which have been confessed, and through the merits of Jesus been taken into the heavenly sanctuary, can be atoned for. As in the type, those who have not afflicted their souls and confessed their sins will be cut off.

The cleansing of the sanctuary, the investigative judgment,

is the last work in the sanctuary, and when this is ended, Christ will lay down the censer forever, and come as King to gather home the fruit of his labor, and destroy out of his kingdom the tares of sin. Before he comes, the decree of Rev. 22: 11, 12, goes forth: "He that is unrighteous, let him do unrighteousness still: he that is filthy, let him be made filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him do righteousness still: and he that is holy, let him be made holy still. Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to render to each man according as his work is." This fiat goes forth before the Lord comes to reward his servants, and shows conclusively that his ministration as high priest is finished, and the eternal destiny of every man is irrevocably fixed.

At that time the investigation in the heavenly sanctuary is finished, and the atonement for sin has been made. "And he saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor." Isa. 59:16. There comes a time when there will be no intercessor in the heavenly sanctuary, and at that time there will be no probation for the lost. We read of a time when men will "go with their flocks and with their herds to seek the Lord; but they shall not find him; he hath withdrawn himself from them." Hosea 5:6. Then there will be "a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the word of the Lord: and they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and from to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it." Amos 8:11, 12. Why not tell these of a "second probation"? Ah, probation is closed, and the day of salvation is passed! The theology of Millennial Dawn has no place in it for a fulfilment of these scriptures.

There is a line to be drawn soon in this age when the destiny of sinners is fixed. There is nothing in the plan of salvation as revealed in the sanctuary which makes provision for the unnumbered millions of the earth who have passed into the tomb as rejectors of every overture of mercy, to have another chance to determine whether or not they desire to be saved.

Let none make the fatal mistake of putting off salvation, expecting under the "favorable opportunities" of a future age to perfect a Christian character. Behold, now is the accepted time, and this is the day of salvation. Jesus still is man's intercessor, and all may come *now* to the throne of grace and find help in time of need.

The Parable of the Shut Door

The doctrine of a second probation appeals to the unregenerate heart. It makes entirely unnecessary any present repentance or any missionary operations in home or foreign fields. According to that teaching, the great missionary campaign of all time is to occur in the "succeeding age," when the church, the "royal priesthood," will bring all to an "accurate knowledge of the truth."

In Matthew 24 the signs which are to precede the coming of the Lord, and herald the end of the world, are given by our Saviour in response to the question of the disciples, "What shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" In chapter 25 is given the experience of the church near the end of time, the period immediately preceding the coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven. The professed church is here represented by ten virgins, five of whom were wise and five foolish. "And while they [the foolish virgins] went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: *and the door was shut.*" Verse 10. This is the time spoken of in Rev. 19:7: "For the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready." Here Christ is represented as taking to himself a bride. The church is not the bride (Rev. 21:9, 10), but the *invited guests* present at the marriage supper. Rev. 19:7-9.

His going in before the Father to receive the bride, is thus described by the prophet: "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of

heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." Dan. 7: 13, 14. The "coming" here spoken of is not the coming of Jesus to this earth to receive his people, but his coming "to the Ancient of days," the Father, to receive from him the kingdoms of this world. That this is before his second coming is very clearly stated. "He said therefore, A certain nobleman [Christ] went into a far country [heaven] to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return."

This is very clear; but note that at this time, before he comes, the door of mercy is shut. Matt. 25: 10. Probation for man is ended, and some are shut out, and lost. "When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are." Luke 13: 25. Here is a time when the door of mercy will be shut, and the reply to those on the outside from the One who has shut the door, holds out no hope of "a second probation." "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out." Verse 28.

But why should they weep and gnash their teeth if they are to have another chance to enter in? It is clear that they have no such chance, and fully understand that they are "thrust out" forever. We nowhere read that the "door" which is once "shut" is ever to be opened, and another "chance" offered to all the lost. It logically follows that if the Lord should do this for sinners, he would needs do the same for the devil and all the fallen angels. Why not give them another chance as well as man?

The great lines of prophecy in the book of Daniel throw much light upon this question. In the second chapter, under

the symbol of a great metallic image, the history of the world from the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar till the final destruction of all the kingdoms of this world is given. Babylon, Medo-Persia, Grecia, and Rome were to bear sway successively as universal monarchies. The fourth kingdom, Rome, symbolized by the legs of iron, was to lose its iron stability and become divided, as indicated by the mixture of iron and clay. Between the years A. D. 356 and 483 the Roman empire was divided into ten kingdoms; namely, the Alemanni, Franks, Vandals, Burgundians, Visigoths, Lombards, Ostrogoths, Suevi, Heruli, Anglo-Saxons. The territory of these ten kingdoms is to-day occupied by the nations of the Old World. The Lord further declares, "And in the days of these [ten] kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever." Dan. 2:44.

This is not a description of the work of the gospel, and the conversion of the world. Earthly kingdoms are to be broken in pieces and consumed. They are to be utterly wiped out of existence, and the fifth universal kingdom, symbolized by the stone which is cut out without hands, is to be eternally established in the territory now occupied by earthly kingdoms, when the earth is made new. "Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer thrashing-floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth." Verses 34, 35.

This stone represents the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour, which is to be established in the earth. When Jesus comes the second time with power and great glory, the wicked nations of earth will wail and lament because of him. Matt. 24:30. They are not converted, but are as the worthless chaff blown

from the thrashing-floor after the wheat has all been gathered out for the garner. They are not to have another probation in a glorious millennial age. O, no; they are carried away, and "no place" is found for them in the entire universe. Nothing, it would seem, could be more conclusive on this point. See also Ps. 37:9, 10.

This destruction of sinful nations is described also in the Psalms: "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." Ps. 2:8. Here the heathen, or nations, who, we are told, have not had "a full opportunity," are mentioned. Are they to have another probation in an age to come? Listen: "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." Verse 9. This language is so clear that comment would but weaken its force. Having forgotten the Lord, they must needs perish. The wicked nations of the world are only chaff in the Lord's sight, and instead of having a second probation, will be "turned back unto Sheol." Ps. 9:17, A. R. V.

In Daniel 7 the testimony upon this point is equally clear. Here the same four universal kingdoms are brought to view. Also the ten kingdoms, symbolized by the ten horns on the head of the "dreadful and terrible" fourth beast. The rise of the little horn, or papal power, is then brought to view; and the wicked and blasphemous work which it was to perform during the long dreary years of the papal millennium, is clearly outlined. "And he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time." Dan. 7:25. This brings us down the stream of time to the beginning of that period known as "the time of the end," which began A. D. 1798, or near the time when the kingdom of Christ is to be set up.

But what is done with this power symbolized by the "little horn"? Is it to be converted? — No. Is a "second probation"

in the "age to come" promised?—*No*. "I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame." Dan. 7: 11, last part. "But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end." Verse 26.

This same beast power is brought to view in Revelation. When Jesus comes crowned "King of kings and Lord of lords," this antichristian power and all the armies of the earth are "gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army." Rev. 19: 19. And what is the conclusion of this terrible contest? Are they given another "opportunity" in the millennial age, under more "favorable" circumstances, to accept of the King against whom they are now making war? Indeed, they are not. "And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshiped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone." Verse 20. There is no hint in all this of a second probation. It is utter destruction from the presence of God. 2 Thess. 1: 7-9. Instead of a "second probation" they go alive into the lake of fire. They are destroyed in the "burning flame."

A Conclusive Example

Through all the ages the Lord has had his witnesses. The fact that some from every kindred, tongue, and people have chosen to know God and be saved in the kingdom (Rev. 7: 9) is conclusive evidence that all might have chosen life and been saved. The fact that they chose not to know God is no argument that they must be given another opportunity to see if they will change their minds. Notice what is said concerning the antediluvians: "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and

became heir of the righteousness which is by faith." Heb. 11:7. Noah chose to follow God. All the antediluvians could have done the same. The Lord here says that the antediluvians are condemned because they did not repent. They made their choice, and, having decided they would not have Christ rule over them, the condemnation of God rests upon them. Are these sinful giants all to have another chance in which most of them are to repent and have their condemnation changed into approbation? God has never so stated. Having gone down into the tomb under condemnation because they rejected light, they must remain under it forever. "In the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be." Eccl. 11:3.

The Bible Teaching Concerning the Millennium

No discussion of the doctrine of a future probation would be complete without a consideration of Rev. 20:5, which reads as follows: "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection." This scripture stands in connection with the record of the binding of Satan during the thousand years, the millennium, and seems to have been written expressly to guard against the heresy of a future probation. It completely overthrows the whole system of Millennial Dawn theology concerning the so-called "second chance" in the millennial age.

Two resurrections are here brought to view, as a *first* implies a *second*. The period which intervenes between these two resurrections is clearly stated to be a thousand years. Some live, but the "rest" remain in the embrace of death "until the thousand years are finished." Those who live in the first resurrection are the righteous. "*Blessed and holy* is he that hath part in the first resurrection." Rev. 20:6. And this resurrection of the overcomers takes place at the second coming of Christ, when he appears attended by all the angels in heaven, to reap the harvest of the earth and gather into his garner the sheaves separated forever from the tares of sin. "For the

Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first." 1 Thess. 4:16.

As the "dead in Christ," the righteous, *all* live in the "first resurrection," which takes place when Jesus comes, the "rest of the dead" can refer only to the wicked. This is the only millennial period marked off in the Bible, and is the very period the Millennial Dawn teaching has in mind when it talks of that "golden age" in which the lost will have a "second probation," or "another chance," under more "favorable circumstances;" when the heathen will hear the gospel, and be converted. But we are told in this scripture, in language so plain that it is not possible to misunderstand the meaning, that the heathen, the Sodomites, Amalekites, and others who are especially mentioned as having a "second chance," are all dead.

During this entire millennial period, in this so-called "golden age," instead of being alive and listening to the gospel, they are sleeping in the tomb. The one thousand years is bounded at either end by a resurrection, making mistake impossible as to when it begins or ends. It is ushered in by the resurrection of the righteous, and closes with a resurrection of the wicked, who "live not" until this millennial period has passed. How, then, are these unnumbered millions of the incorrigible to hear the gospel? Can these corpses believe and repent? If the work of the church is to proclaim the gospel to the lost during the one thousand years, it will be a gloomy task indeed. As well go out now into the cemetery and conduct evangelistic services, and expect converts.

And this is the "second chance," to which the rebels against the government of heaven are bidden to look forward. Surely it is a vain hope. So long as this text stands in God's Word, there can not be the faintest hope held out to sinners of a "golden age" in which all will have "another opportunity" to forsake their ungodly ways, and serve the Lord.

The advocates of the Millennial Dawn see this (nobody, it would seem, could help seeing it). Something must be done to

save their entire system of faith from being wrecked by this plain statement of the Word. In some way the troublesome scripture must be disposed of. And this is the way they do it:—

“In this verse (Rev. 20:5) the words, ‘But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished,’ are spurious. They are not found in the oldest and most reliable Greek manuscripts, the Sinaitic, Vatican Nos. 1209 and 1160, nor the Syriac manuscript. We must remember that many passages found in the modern copies are additions which do not properly belong to the Bible. Since commanded not to add to the Word of God, it is our duty to repudiate such additions as soon as their spurious character is established. The words indicated probably crept into the text by accident, in the fifth century; for no manuscript of earlier date (either Greek or Syriac) contains this clause. It was probably at first merely a *marginal comment* made by a reader, expressive of his thought upon the text, and copied into the body of the text by some subsequent transcriber who failed to distinguish between the text and the comment.”—*Plan of the Ages*, Vol. I, pages 288, 289 (note).

The statement that there are “many passages” in “modern copies” of the Bible which do not “properly belong” in the inspired record is a claim similar to that put forth by that modern phase of infidelity known as the “Higher Criticism.” The tendency of all such statements is to cast suspicion upon the Word, and weaken faith in the Bible as an unerring guide.

It is necessary for them to impeach this witness, else the fable of a future probation is revealed. But there is no authority for discrediting the inspiration of the text, unless it be the statement of the author of the book from which the preceding extract is taken; and this is hardly sufficient. The English edition of the Revised Version makes no reference to this text as being “not found” in ancient Greek manuscripts. The American Revised Version, which is admitted by the ripest scholars in the land to be the best translation of the Holy Scrip-

tures extant, does not give the slightest hint that a part of the text is omitted in the "most reliable Greek manuscript." Roth-erham's translation, another excellent work, though noting elsewhere "doubtful" renderings, says nothing about this text's being spurious. The Interlinear translation also puts this text on the same basis as other portions of the Holy Scriptures. It is found in Young's translation also, without any hint of its being some "marginal comment." Sawyer's translation contains it, also the Twentieth Century New Testament. In the translation from the Greek text of Von Tischendorf it is found unquestioned. The Emphatic Diaglott based on Griesbach's text gives this verse, and in a foot-note says: "These words (the rest of the dead lived not again till the thousand years were finished) were probably omitted by oversight in Vatican manuscript [No. 1160] as they are found in A. B. C., though not in the Syriac." By "A" is meant *Codex Alexandrinus*; by "B," *Codex Vaticanus*, No. 2066, of the seventh or eighth century; by "C," *Codex Ephraemi Rescriptus*. Finally, the best Greek text, that of Westcott and Hort, contains the passage, and neither have the Revised Versions nor any of the critics, so far as we know, even questioned it. The revisers adopted for their revision the text "for which the evidence is decidedly preponderating," and when that differed from the Greek text "from which the Authorized Version was made," the rule was that "the alteration be expressed in the margin." (See Preface to Revised New Testament, Division II, Paragraph 4.) But there is not even an indication of doubt over Rev. 20: 5.

Neither Drs. Adam Clark nor Bliss, in their comments on this scripture, offers any objection to its genuineness. They had access to these Greek manuscripts, and had some opportunity to know if these words were only a "marginal comment" which got mixed in accidentally. All these, and scores of other good scholars, who have had opportunity for the most extended research, pronounce the text genuine. The clause in question

is considered spurious only by those who have a doctrine to prove which the text condemns.

Satan is bound by circumstances in the earth, made desolate at the coming of Christ. At that time the saints are all taken to heaven, and the wicked are slain. Then, confined in the earth, compelled to wander amid the ruin which his own hands have wrought, with none to tempt or annoy, he will indeed be "bound." At the end of this millennium of darkness and chaos, he is loosed through a reversal of the events which bound him. The city of God, with all the saints, descends from heaven on the earth (Rev. 20: 1-3; Zech. 14: 4, 5), and the wicked dead are raised. Satan again has access to his children, and begins his work of deception. He marshals his legions into battle array, and surrounds the camp of the saints. This is the first and only time the entire family of Adam stand on the earth together. Then the wicked will see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the saved in the kingdom of heaven, and they themselves cast out.

But does the church, the "royal priesthood," begin the work of preaching to them the gospel? Does a power which they "will strive in vain to resist" seize hold of them? Is a "second chance" held out to them?—Not by any means. "And they [the wicked] went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them." Rev. 20: 9. Instead of the "second chance," it is "the second death." Verse 14. They are consumed, root and branch. Mal. 4: 1. Sin and sinner are no more. The entire universe is clean, and the great controversy is forever ended.

"Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him: and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." Isa. 55: 7.